

NEW HANOVER COUNTY COMMISSION CANDIDATE RICHARD COLLIER (R)

Republican Richard Collier is running for New Hanover County Commission in 2026 after an unsuccessful 2025 bid for Wilmington City Council. Collier is a civil engineer who has worked on several of the county's largest development projects and a longtime Wilmington and New Hanover County planning official. In November, Collier will face Republican incumbent LeAnn Pierce, Democratic incumbent Rob Zapple, Democrat LeShonda Wallace, and Libertarian Bob Drach for two seats on the County Commission. New Hanover County, which is home to the city of Wilmington, has recently gained national attention as a [political bellwether](#), having flipped blue in 2020 after voting for Republican presidents for 44 years. New Hanover County's largest voting block is Unaffiliated (42%), followed by Republicans (29%), and Democrats (27%).

Key Findings:

Collier has spent his entire career in the real estate and development industry and the industry has fueled his political campaigns. Collier has worked as a civil engineer and planner for McKim and Creed for roughly two decades, with a project list that includes many of the region's largest developments — Mayfaire, RiverLights, CenterPoint, and others. The *Cape Fear Beacon* reported that Collier's 2025 city council campaign contributions “read like a who's who of the real estate world in Southeastern North Carolina,” including developers he's worked with directly on specific projects.

Collier recused himself from planning board votes on multiple occasions because his firm, McKim and Creed, was the project's engineer. During his long tenure on New Hanover County planning commissions, Collier had to recuse himself from board votes on multiple occasions because of his firm's involvement in development projects. He recused from the 2018 CenterPoint vote and the 2017 Airlie Road subdivision vote for this reason. In 2016, he advocated in writing for a different rezoning as McKim & Creed's director of planning and land development while also sitting on the commission that reviewed it. Most recently, in June 2026, his firm's largest active project — a 35-year, roughly 1,400-acre development in Brunswick County — was pulled after residents, staff, and commissioners raised concerns, with Collier publicly disputing that criticism.

Collier has built his campaign around his identity as an engineer, framing affordability, environmental protection, and growth management as technical problems rather than political ones. Although he self-identifies as having “core conservative principles,” Collier's campaign platform emphasizes his pragmatic engineering background and pledges to “protect affordability” while also committing to “environmental protections, stormwater planning, land conservation” and tying new development to “real infrastructure capacity.” In interviews, Collier has repeatedly invoked his engineering credentials directly, saying “as a civil engineer, I understand how to balance growth with conservation,” and highlighting his support for increased density and expanded public transit options.

Potential Attacks Against Collier From The Left
Career Developer with Deep Real Estate Industry Ties
Conflicts of Interest and Recusals on Planning Votes

Lost 2025 Council Race / No Elected Office
Corporate and GOP Ties
<u>Potential Attacks Against Collier From The Right</u>
NA

BACKGROUND & BIO

2003-Present: Collier works as Regional Growth Manager at McKim & Creed Inc.

“Regional Manager / Asst VP in our Planning Development and Natural Resources Business Unit (PDNR). Manage our PDNR Group in Wilmington, NC; provide business development; manage clients and projects.” [Richard Collier LinkedIn, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

- **McKim and Creed’s Wilmington-area project list includes several of the region’s largest developments.** “Richard Collier serves as the Planning Commission Vice Chair and in a professional capacity as regional manager at McKim and Creed — an engineering company and planning company. In Wilmington, McKim and Creed projects include Centerpoint, the Airlie Road development, River Place in downtown Wilmington, Riverlights, UNCW Seahawk Crossing, River Road realignment project, and NHRMC Heart Center.” [Port City Daily, [11/18/18](#)]

2014-Present: Collier serves on the City of Wilmington Planning Commission. “Serving on the City of Wilmington’s Planning Commission providing recommendation to the City Council related to zoning and land use matters. Have served as Chairman and Vice-Chairman on the Commission.” [Richard Collier LinkedIn, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

2025: Days after losing his campaign for Wilmington City Council, Collier announced he would run for New Hanover County Commission. “Richard Collier announced today that he will run for the New Hanover County Commission, intending to file in December after an unsuccessful bid for the Wilmington City Council. Collier, a civil engineer and Wilmington planning commissioner, said the experience of running a citywide campaign and hearing directly from residents strengthened his desire to serve the community at the county level. ‘Running for City Council was an incredible experience this year,’ he wrote in a press release. ‘Having the chance to talk with the people of Wilmington about their concerns and how my background as a civil engineer could help move our community forward is something I am truly grateful for.’” [Port City Daily, [11/16/25](#)]

2025: Collier ran for Wilmington City Council. “A longtime Wilmington resident and civil engineer has entered the Wilmington City Council race. Richard Collier, who has lived in Wilmington since 1997 and works for McKim and Creed engineering and surveying firm, made his announcement Tuesday in a media press release. [...] Collier said one of the benefits of his council candidacy is he isn’t a career politician. ‘I’m a problem-solver,’ Collier said. ‘I see challenges not as obstacles, but as opportunities to find smart, cost-effective solutions that work in the real world.’” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

- **Collier was endorsed by the New Hanover County GOP.** “For the City of Wilmington, the GOP endorsed incumbent Luke Waddell and challengers Richard Collier, who currently sits on the city's planning commission, and Ryan Guerrero. Kelly Roberts is also running as a Republican.” [WHQR, 8/27/25]
- **Collier finished fifth out of seven candidates in the city council campaign.** “Seven candidates vied for three seats. As of Tuesday night, with all 27 precincts reporting, JC Lyle had notched 17.22% of the vote, followed by Cassidy Santaguida with 16.78% and Chakema Clinton-Quintana with 16.63%. [...] Luke Waddell (15.33%), Richard M. Collier (13.56%), Clifford D. Barnett (9.64%) and Kelly J. Roberts, Jr. (9.44%%) fell on the losing end.” [WECT, [11/4/25](#)]

2007-2014: Collier served on the New Hanover County Planning Board. “Member of the New Hanover County Planning Board which aides in directing planning efforts within the unincorporated portions of New Hanover County. Served as Chairman and Vice Chairman.” [Richard Collier LinkedIn, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

- **2014: Collier resigned from the New Hanover County Planning Board citing personal reasons.** “There are two seats currently in flux on the board. Andy Heath resigned earlier this year, and board Chairman Richard Collier, who joined the board in 2007, has notified staff and the commissioners that he will resign in July. Heath's term will expire in July of this year and Collier's will expire in July 2015. Both resigned for personal reasons.” [Wilmington Star News, 4/12/14]

1989-1995: Collier attended North Carolina State University. Collier has a degree in civil engineering from North Carolina State University. [Richard Collier LinkedIn, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

Collier grew up on a farm in Stedman, North Carolina. “Richard grew up in Stedman, North Carolina, a small farming town about 30 miles east of Fayetteville. From a young age, he worked with his uncle on the farm. That experience taught him hard work, perseverance, and how to work alongside others toward a common goal. Richard also grew up performing in bands, chorus, chorales, plays, and musicals. Those experiences helped him become comfortable speaking with people, listening closely, and communicating clearly. Today, Richard is most proud of his wife, his children, and his grandchildren.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Total Receipts (Jan 2025 – June 30, 2026)	Total Expenditures (Jan 2025 – June 30, 2026)	Cash On Hand (June 30, 2026)
\$26,413.13	\$2,493.37	\$25,165.71

[New Hanover County Board of Elections, filed [7/10/26](#)]

2025: Collier raised \$70,000 for his 2025 campaign for Wilmington City Council, largely from the real estate and development sector. “Civil engineer with McKim and Creed, Richard Collier demonstrates \$70,952 raised and \$42,981 spent to date, leaving the campaign with

\$27,971 in on-hand cash. The majority of the funds — \$69,952 — came from individual contributions. Collier received multiple maximum contributions — which is \$6,800, according to North Carolina campaign finance laws — also from the real estate and development sector. Large donors include D. Logan of Logan Development and real-estate investor Gregg Goldenberg with The Ardent Company. Other major contributions came from Craig Stevens (Stevens Fine Homes, \$2,000), Mayfaire developer Hyman Brody (\$2,500) — who Collier has worked with on the Reserve at Mayfaire apartments and the proposed Mayfaire West development — Tim Milam (Coldwell Banker Sea Coast Advantage, \$2,000), and George Pittman (Intracoastal Real Estate, \$1,000). Key political figures also contributed, including \$100 from state senator Michael Lee (in his capacity as an attorney), \$500 from former New Hanover County commissioner and current Endowment board member Woody White, and \$500 from NHC commissioner chair Bill Rivenbark’s political committee.” [Port City Daily, [10/26/25](#)]

- **The Cape Fear Beacon wrote that Collier’s campaign contributions “read like a who’s who of the real estate world in Southeastern North Carolina.”** “The population surge has put figures tied to the real estate ecosystem into positions of influence. Campaign donations and personal connections fuel suspicion, and donors listed in financial filings from candidates such as Bill Saffo, Luke Waddell, and Richard Collier read like a who’s who of the real estate world in Southeastern North Carolina.” [Cape Fear Beacon, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier’s campaign expenses focused heavily on “strategy, consulting, and maximum visual impact through advertising.” “Collier’s expenses focus heavily on strategy, consulting, and maximum visual impact through advertising, with \$5,500 going to Muse Consultants Group for marketing development and \$3,000 to Starboard Strategies for consulting and social media assistance. His largest expenses are for outdoor advertising, paying \$6,820 to Lamar Outdoor and \$2,500 to Grey Advertising for billboards. The campaign funded \$4,949 to New Hanover Printing for signage, \$1,510 to the Greater Wilmington Business Journal for print ads, and \$747 to Facebook for social media ads.” [Port City Daily, [10/26/25](#)]

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

According to North Carolina campaign finance records, Collier has made one small contribution to a Republican.

Category	Contributor	Employer	Occupation	Date	Amount	Recipient	Recipient Jurisdiction
Money to Candidates	COLLIER, RICHARD WILMINGTON, NC 28409	MCKIM & CREED	CIVIL ENGINEER	10-02-2020	\$100	LEE, MICHAEL (R)	NC

[Open Secrets, accessed 7/24/26]

2025: Collier’s Wilmington City Council campaign made political contributions to Republican allies. “The Collier campaign itself made notable donations to political allies, including \$500 to the Committee to Elect Michael Lee and \$500 to Phil Berger for North Carolina Senate.” [Port City Daily, [10/26/25](#)]

AFFORDABILITY

Campaign website: “Keep it Livable.” “Keep It Livable. Protect affordability, support public schools, grow the local workforce, and preserve quality of life.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

Campaign website: “Richard will focus on the cost of living, responsible growth, tax discipline, and practical housing solutions.” “Protect Affordability and Quality of Life. Longtime residents, working families, young people, and seniors should not be priced out of the county they call home. Richard will focus on the cost of living, responsible growth, tax discipline, and practical housing solutions that respect neighborhoods, infrastructure limits, and private property rights.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

BUDGETS & TAXES

Campaign website: “Keep taxes low, focus on core services.” “Spend Wisely Keep taxes low, focus on core services, and demand honest, transparent budgeting.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

Campaign website: “Keep taxes low through responsible budgeting.” “Keep Taxes Low Through Responsible Budgeting. Families and small businesses have to live within a budget. County government should do the same. Richard will push for disciplined budgeting, clear priorities, careful review of long-term costs, and a focus on core services before asking taxpayers for more.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

CONTROVERSIES

No findings identified.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

June 2026: Collier’s firm pulled back a development agreement for the largest residential project in Brunswick County after residents and county staff voiced concerns. “Brunswick County's biggest residential project has changed directions after developers revoked their proposed partnership with the county. Developers behind the proposed Strategic Maco Road Project pulled their development agreement after Brunswick residents, staff and commissioners voiced concerns about the project reshaping the area. [...] As proposed, the development would be built in phases over the span of 35 years, McKim & Creed Regional Growth Manager Richard Collier said. If approved and all goes accordingly, building will begin in 2028 at the earliest and be completed by 2066. A development agreement was presented to county commissioners, and a public hearing was held during the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners meeting on June 15. A development agreement resembles a contract where the developer and county negotiate terms of the development. [...] Collier said numerous concerns cited by staff have been addressed, including a flood study. ‘It's being presented as we haven't done jack,’ Collier said. Representatives also said some staff conditions have been newly given to applicants. The timing has not allowed them to fully address their requests before the hearing, the representatives

explained, noting applicants are willing to work with the county. ‘We're doing what's being asked,’ Collier said.” [Wilmington Star News, [6/16/26](#)]

2025: Collier: “I’d like to see the continued expansion of the NC State Ports and industrial economic development across our region.” “GWBJ: If elected, which industry would you like to see grow in your next term? Collier: I’d like to see the continued expansion of the NC State Ports and industrial economic development across our region. Both bring good-paying jobs, strengthen our economy and build on Wilmington’s natural advantages as a port city. I’ll also work to support growth in advanced manufacturing, technology and small businesses by streamlining processes, cutting red tape and ensuring our infrastructure – roads, water and broadband – can support them.” [WilmingtonBiz, [10/9/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “Economic investment shouldn’t just go downtown or to certain corridors — it should benefit neighborhoods across the city.” “PCD: As the city continues to see an influx of residents, how do you think city council should ensure Wilmington’s economy keeps pace and opportunities remain varied across all ages and types of households? What can the city do to ensure its residents have a high enough wage to afford life in Wilmington? RC: To keep Wilmington’s economy strong, we need a strategy that supports both existing businesses and emerging industries. The port is one of our greatest assets, and I’d like to see continued investment there. At the same time, we should promote advanced manufacturing, technology, and small business growth by cutting red tape, streamlining permitting, and ensuring infrastructure — roads, water, and broadband — keeps pace. We also need to focus on workforce development. I’ll support partnerships with Cape Fear Community College and local employers to align training with 21st-century job needs. A strong economy is one where residents don’t just have jobs — they have careers with wages that allow them to live here. Finally, growth must be balanced. Economic investment shouldn’t just go downtown or to certain corridors — it should benefit neighborhoods across the city. A rising tide must lift all boats.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier called for “responsible growth — not moratoriums, and not ‘not in my backyard,’ but planning that is responsible and considerate.” “PCD: Some people have expressed the city is overdeveloped already and the idea for smart growth is “too little, too late” — what do you say to that, and are there solutions or corrections you think are needed? RC: There are many new residents seeking a place to call home, and they are choosing to pick Wilmington as home. This is a wonderful community — home to us all — with room for additions and improvements. I understand why some people are frustrated. Growth has outpaced infrastructure in some areas, and we’re now playing catch-up. But we can’t reverse the past. We can only make better choices going forward. That means focusing on responsible growth — not moratoriums, and not “not in my backyard,” but planning that is responsible and considerate. When public and private partners work together with a shared goal of preserving what makes Wilmington unique while managing growth, we’ll get the outcomes our community deserves.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2025: Collier supported limited use of special use permits for development. “PCD: Recently, the city put forth the idea to do away with special use permits, thus foregoing the quasi-judicial process for development consideration. Where do you stand on this? RC: I’m cautious. While I do support efforts to make the zoning process more accessible and predictable, I don’t believe

replacing Special Use Permits (SUPs) with conditional zoning is always the best path forward. There are still limited but important situations where SUPs are appropriate. With the updated Land Development Code, the number of cases that require an SUP has decreased — but we still need a transparent process that gives residents a voice and ensures higher scrutiny for certain projects.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

- **2025: Collier voted against eliminating special use permits.** “The Wilmington Planning Commission’s debate over special-use hearings turned into a proxy for how the public contributes in development decisions at the commission’s meeting last week. The commission voted 4-3 — Commissioners John Lennon, Richard Collier and Livian Jones dissenting — in favor of ridding its land code of special use permits. These devices are for uncommon land utilizations like zoos, universities, or assisted living facilities that need special approval in certain zoning districts. [...] Commissioner and city council candidate Richard Collier suggested the process stay the same, yet be put under the Wilmington Board of Adjustment’s purview, since the board already deals in quasi-judicial hearings. However, Chair Pollock suggested this would merely be a transfer of the problem and the notion didn’t pick up steam.” [Port City Daily, [5/12/25](#)]

2025: Collier opposed state legislation stripping local government’s power to regulate development. “PCD: Where do you stand on H.B. 765, which restricts local government’s power to regulate development? RC: There are parts of HB 765 that I understand and support — particularly efforts to streamline processes and reduce unnecessary red tape. But I do not support taking away local government’s ability to regulate growth in our own communities. Wilmington faces unique challenges as a growing coastal city. One-size-fits-all policies from Raleigh don’t always work here. That’s why it’s important we keep a strong relationship with our legislative delegation. We need to retain local tools to plan responsibly and protect our community’s character.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “I want to future-proof Wilmington by taking a common-sense approach to planning for five, 10, and 20 years down the road.” “PCD: What do you think the city is getting right and what is it getting wrong currently, and what will you do to help reshape or enhance these areas? RC: Wilmington is getting several big things right. Crime is down. The Fire Department’s ISO-1 rating is helping reduce insurance costs. We’ve made progress on stormwater management and are expanding affordable housing options. The Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan are strong, living documents that guide good policy. But there’s still room to improve — especially in how we manage growth, invest in infrastructure, and engage the community. I want to future-proof Wilmington by taking a common-sense approach to planning for five, 10, and 20 years down the road. I’ll make choices that ensure Wilmington continues to be a city we’re proud of — for both current residents and future generations.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2018: Collier recused himself from voting on the massive CenterPoint mixed use development because he was an engineer on the project. “The second massive mixed-use development to go before city leaders this week is one step closer to Military Cutoff Road.

Wednesday night, Wilmington's Planning Commission approved rezoning and a special use permit for CenterPoint, a planned 23-acre development at the intersection with Eastwood Road. The project can now head to city council for a final vote, which has yet to be scheduled.

Two board members had to recuse themselves before Wednesday's vote: vice-chairman Richard Collier and Bruce Bowman. Collier is a regional manager with McKim & Creed, CenterPoint's project engineer, and Bowman is CenterPoint's consulting architect." [Wilmington Star News, 6/6/18]

ELECTIONS & BALLOT ACCESS

No findings identified.

EDUCATION

Campaign website: "Richard supports safe, well-maintained schools and better planning so development decisions do not place unnecessary strain on students, teachers, families, and taxpayers." "Strengthen Public Schools. County commissioners do not run the school system, but they do help fund facilities, capital needs, and long-term investments. Richard supports safe, well-maintained schools and better planning so development decisions do not place unnecessary strain on students, teachers, families, and taxpayers." [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

Campaign website: "Richard supports practical career pathways that connect students and workers with opportunities in skilled trades, construction, public safety, health care, marine industries, technology, small business, and other fields that keep New Hanover County moving forward." "Support Workforce Development. A strong local economy depends on a strong local workforce. Richard supports practical career pathways that connect students and workers with opportunities in skilled trades, construction, public safety, health care, marine industries, technology, small business, and other fields that keep New Hanover County moving forward." [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/21/26](#)]

ENVIRONMENT

Campaign website: "Richard supports environmental protections, stormwater planning, land conservation, and responsible development decisions that protect quality of life now and for future generations." "Protect and Expand Green Spaces New Hanover County's natural spaces, waterways, beaches, parks, and coastal character are part of what makes this community special. Richard supports environmental protections, stormwater planning, land conservation, and responsible development decisions that protect quality of life now and for future generations." [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

2025: Collier supported protecting Wilmington's wetlands and tree canopy: "Development can go hand-in-hand with greenway expansion, creating healthier, more resilient communities." "PCD: What does balancing green space with development needs look like in your view, such as when it comes to protecting wetlands or rebuilding the tree canopy? Do you have examples of cities or developments that have done this successfully? RC: Wilmington's

natural assets — our waterways, wetlands, and tree canopy — are part of what make this city so special. They're not just nice to have — they're critical for flood protection, storm resilience, and quality of life. Protecting them must be part of how we manage growth. To me, balance means requiring developers to do more than just meet minimums. That means preserving tree canopy on site, investing in planting, and using best practices in stormwater management. It also means building more connected greenways and trails, so development and open space work together. I've worked on projects where this balance was achieved. RiverLights, for example, incorporated buffers and stormwater systems that protected surrounding wetlands. Development can go hand-in-hand with greenway expansion, creating healthier, more resilient communities. Wilmington should take those lessons and build on them. As an engineer, I know how to design with conservation in mind — and I'll make sure that perspective is part of every decision city council makes.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “Responsible growth means protecting our wetlands and floodplains, preserving trees and green space, and making sure our infrastructure can actually support new development.” “PCD: You also mention the phrase “responsible growth” when it comes to environmental needs and development — can you be more specific what that looks like in your view? What’s the biggest challenge to strike that balance? RC: As a civil engineer, I understand how to balance growth with conservation. Responsible growth means protecting our wetlands and floodplains, preserving trees and green space, and making sure our infrastructure can actually support new development. I’ve worked on projects that do just that. The challenge is meeting our city’s housing needs while safeguarding what makes Wilmington special. It requires careful planning, input from the community, and a commitment to holding developers to high standards. If we lead with a focus on responsible development and environmental stewardship, we can strike that balance.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “Preserving wetlands protects not just the environment, but property, public safety, and long-term community resilience.” “PCD: You mention continuing to protect Wilmington’s wetlands; legislation has made that more precarious in recent years. How would you combat it, if you win your council bid? RC: Protecting wetlands must be intentional and meaningful. While recent legislation has created some new protections, it has also limited the tools local governments can use. My goal as a Council member will be to support city programs that address stormwater runoff, enforce CAMA regulations, and advance local environmental protections. But we can’t stop at the city limits — we must maintain a strong, respectful working relationship with our local delegation in the General Assembly. I’ll advocate for Wilmington’s needs and make the case that preserving wetlands protects not just the environment, but property, public safety, and long-term community resilience.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

ETHICS & GOOD GOVERNMENT

Campaign website: “Richard will work for clearer communication, open-door leadership, plain-language budgeting, and earlier public engagement before major decisions are made.” “Bring Honesty and Transparency to County Government. Residents should not have to be insiders to understand how county decisions are made. Richard will work for clearer communication, open-door leadership, plain-language budgeting, and earlier public engagement before major decisions are made.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

2025: Collier: “Transparency and communication will be priorities.” “PCD: Some residents have accused the city council of only representing a select few in the community, rather than the needs of all. Do you agree with this sentiment? Explain. What would you do in a leadership position to represent more equitably? RC: I’ve heard that concern and I think it’s fair. Too often, residents feel like decisions are made for developers, insiders, or a select few, rather than for the community as a whole. That perception erodes trust in local government. If elected, I’ll work to change that. Transparency and communication will be priorities. That means engaging neighborhoods earlier in planning processes, explaining the ‘why’ behind decisions, and listening to feedback — even when it’s critical. On the planning commission, I’ve seen firsthand how important it is to make residents feel heard. People don’t expect to win every debate, but they do expect honesty and fairness. If I bring anything to this role, it’s the commitment to represent all of Wilmington — not just the loudest voices in the room.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

HEALTHCARE

No findings identified.

HOUSING

2025: Collier: “Housing should be located near jobs and transit corridors, and infill should respect neighborhood character.” “GWB: What is your approach to growth and development in Wilmington? Collier: “Growth is here – we can either manage it or let it manage us. I’ll push for smart, responsible growth tied to existing infrastructure and services, so new development doesn’t overwhelm our roads or stormwater systems. Housing should be located near jobs and transit corridors, and infill should respect neighborhood character. I’ll also bring accountability to city council – ensuring that decisions are transparent and rooted in long-term planning, not short-term convenience. As an engineer, I understand how to balance growth with infrastructure and sustainability.” [WilmingtonBiz, [10/9/25](#)]

- **Collier: “The goal is balance: keeping Wilmington livable for teachers, nurses, first responders, and families while preserving what makes our city special.”** “GWB: Would you put an emphasis on affordable housing in the city? How would you approach the issue? Collier: “Yes. Wilmington needs both affordable and workforce housing, but it must be done responsibly. I’ll support partnerships with nonprofits, encourage public-private collaboration, and advocate for zoning reforms and incentives that allow more flexibility—such as accessory dwelling units and multi-family housing on appropriate sites. Growth should be tied to infrastructure capacity and environmental protections, so we’re not trading affordability for flooding or traffic. The goal is balance: keeping Wilmington livable for teachers, nurses, first responders, and families while preserving what makes our city special.” [WilmingtonBiz, [10/9/25](#)]

2025: Collier supported zoning reforms to allow ADUs and multi-family housing while also guiding development “toward corridors that already have infrastructure, transit, and access to jobs, while protecting established single-family neighborhoods from incompatible infill.” “PCD: In development conversations, the supply of housing and affordability are often at

odds with residents' desire to keep density low. How would you propose tackling these issues respectively? Do you think it's possible for the city to satisfy both desires? Why or why not? RC: It's absolutely possible to pursue affordability while respecting neighborhood character, but it requires smart planning. Not every part of Wilmington is suited for high density — but some areas are. I believe we need to guide new housing toward corridors that already have infrastructure, transit, and access to jobs, while protecting established single-family neighborhoods from incompatible infill. I support zoning reforms that allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and multi-family housing in targeted locations, paired with incentives for developers who include affordable or workforce units. At the same time, I believe we must hold developers accountable for quality design, buffers, and compatibility with surrounding areas. The truth is, Wilmington's housing shortage won't be solved by saying 'yes' to every project or 'no' to all density. The answer is balance. We can expand supply, bring down costs, and preserve the character of our neighborhoods — if we have leaders willing to make thoughtful, long-term decisions.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “I support density through increased height, particularly in areas with existing infrastructure.” “PCD: With the city and county running out of land, do you support increasing density via height to avoid further sprawl? Why/why not? What else should the city be doing to address housing needs and more importantly affordable housing? RC: Yes, I support density through increased height, particularly in areas with existing infrastructure. The updated Land Development Code gives us the framework to do this responsibly — with increased setbacks, landscape screening, and better stormwater controls. Density allows us to preserve more open space and reduce impervious surfaces while also increasing housing options. Having more housing opportunities for both renters and homeowners helps address supply — and when we create more diverse housing types, we create more affordability. That's just good planning, and it's how we maintain a thriving city.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2017: Collier recused himself from voting on the Airlie subdivision development in the Wilmington Planning Commission because he was an engineer on the project. “After nearly three contentious hours in which more than a dozen residents expressed concerns about a subdivision's impact on Airlie Road, the Wilmington Planning Commission ultimately decided Wednesday to recommend approval of the plans. About 70 people attended Wednesday's meeting, nearly 40 of whom were there specifically to oppose the 57-single family home plan on 11.9 vacant acres directly across from Airlie Gardens and behind Wrightsville Avenue's Galleria site. [...] As the board's direction became clear, following a lengthy discussion about the setback, murmurs of ‘shame on you,’ could be heard in the audience. Ultimately, the approval came via a 5-1 vote, with Laura Miller casting the sole nay and Richard Collier, who is serving as the project's engineer, recused.” [Wilmington Star News, 2/2/17]

2016: Collier supported replacing a mobile home park with a mixed-use development. “A mobile home park could be replaced with a mixed-use development if a rezoning proposal set to appear before the Wilmington Planning Commission on Wednesday is ultimately approved. The 38 homes in the Melrose Mobile Home Park sit on 5.24 acres at 7000 Wrightsville Ave., next to the former Galleria site. In early 2015, crews demolished the 97,864-square-foot Galleria shopping complex at 6800 Wrightsville Ave., and planning documents indicate the mixed-use proposal would eventually be part of a broader redevelopment. [...] The subject parcel of this

rezoning request will be developed and integrated with the adjacent Galleria Parcel to create a high-quality, compact and walkable mixed-use development, Richard Collier, the director of planning and land development at McKim & Creed, wrote in a letter to city planning staff. Collier, who also sits on the city's planning commission, noted that replacing the mobile home park with a mixed-use development would improve the area's aesthetics." [Wilmington Star News, 10/5/16]

2012: Collier voted to reject an apartment complex in the Porters Neck area. "The New Hanover County Planning Board on Oct. 4 unanimously turned down a proposed 192-unit apartment complex for Stephens Church Road in the Porters Neck area. The main objection to Stephens Pointe apartment complex, both from the board and about 20 opponents in the audience, was traffic problems caused by what they termed a poorly designed intersection of Stephens Church with Market Street. Board member Anthony Prinz and Chairman Richard Collier also expressed concern that fire trucks would not be able to make the turn from Market Street onto Stephens Church. The negative vote came despite the developer, Gordon Road Development Partners LLC, saying it would go along with a planning staff recommendation to downzone the property to a lower density. The developer had sought a special use permit to build the complex at 8703 Stephens Church Road in a conditional office and institution district. Collier said after the vote that it would be unlikely that the board would approve any project -- even single-family -- for the site because of the intersection's design." [Wilmington Star News, 10/5/12]

2010: Collier supported building new rental apartments: "You can't make the assumption that apartment renters are bad people." "A new gated apartment complex could be built near the Marsh Oaks subdivision off Market Street where neighboring residents fear overcrowding on already busy streets. Despite strong opposition from several residents of the Marsh Oaks subdivision, Marymount townhomes and other surrounding neighborhoods, the New Hanover County Planning Board unanimously voted Thursday during its regular meeting to approve a re-zoning request that would allow a developer to build a 270-unit apartment complex off Market Street and Marsh Oaks Drive. [...] Planning Board Chairman Richard Collier said it is unfair to make judgments about people who rent apartments. 'You can't make the assumption that apartment renters are bad people,' he said. He also said if nothing changed on the property, the owners would still be able to develop it into commercial and residential establishments that could bring the same amount of traffic, if not more. 'If it's allowed in its current state of zoning, which is commercial and residential, traffic would be equal to or possibly more than what they're suggesting,' he said." [Wilmington Star News, 11/5/10]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Campaign website: "Put infrastructure before growth." "Build Smart Put infrastructure before growth and make sure roads, schools, water, sewer, stormwater, and public safety can keep up." [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

2025: Collier: "I want to ensure every resident has access to clean, safe water and expand sidewalks, bike paths, and alternative transportation options." "What goals do you have for the city of Wilmington? Collier: My goal is to build a stronger, safer, and more connected

Wilmington. That starts with easing traffic and modernizing our infrastructure so families and businesses can thrive. I want to ensure every resident has access to clean, safe water and expand sidewalks, bike paths, and alternative transportation options.” [Wilmington Star News, [9/29/25](#)]

2025: Collier opposed tolling the Cape Fear Bridge. “PCD: With the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge price tag escalating to more than \$1 billion, how to fund it also remains debated. Both a toll has been floated and a transit sales tax, which would need voter approval potentially in a tri-county referendum that could include multiple projects in New Hanover, Pender and Brunswick counties. Do you support either and/or is there another option you think should be considered to fund the bridge replacement? RC: The Cape Fear Memorial Bridge is more than a Wilmington project — it’s a regional lifeline. It carries commuters, freight, and commerce that affect Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender counties. That’s why its replacement must be approached regionally. I do not support tolling the bridge. Families who already deal with traffic shouldn’t be asked to pay for something that should be a core public investment. Before asking voters for a sales tax, we should fully pursue any and all state transportation dollars and federal infrastructure grants. If a sales tax is considered, it should be structured regionally and tied to multiple projects — not just the bridge — so voters in all three counties see the value. But my first priority will be collaboration. Wilmington must have a seat at the table in negotiations, but we can’t solve a billion-dollar project on our own. This will require coordinated advocacy at every level of government.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier called for expanded multimodal transit options for Wilmington and said “public transportation should play a bigger role, but it has to be flexible.” “PCD: Traffic is a main complaint for Wilmington residents — how do you envision the city’s role in addressing it? Do you think the city should promote public transportation or the expansion of it? How so? Do you think the city’s current plan to maintain and improve the roads it owns is/will be effective? RC: Traffic is one of the issues I hear about most from residents. As a civil engineer, I know firsthand how poor planning creates gridlock — and how smart planning can ease it. The city’s role is twofold: coordinate closely with NCDOT and the WMPO to ensure state-funded projects align with local growth, and invest directly in the roads, sidewalks, and intersections we control. Simple improvements — like synchronized signals, turn lanes, and roundabouts — can make a big difference. I do believe public transportation should play a bigger role, but it has to be flexible. Fixed-route buses alone won’t meet Wilmington’s needs. We should pilot microtransit, shuttle services, and better connections to the airport, job centers, and UNCW. Expanding bike and pedestrian networks is equally important to give people safe, sustainable alternatives to driving. The city’s current road plan is a step in the right direction, but without stronger coordination and investment in multimodal options, it won’t be enough. We need leadership that understands how transportation systems work — and how to design them for the future.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier said he would invest in stormwater management systems that “combine traditional infrastructure with sustainable practices, like permeable pavements, rain gardens, and natural buffers.” “PCD: What is one other issue not discussed above that you have a plan to address if elected and how would you do so? RC: Stormwater and flooding don’t make headlines every day, but they affect every resident. Wilmington’s stormwater systems are aging, and they weren’t designed for today’s growth or the frequency of severe storms we face.

That's a recipe for flooding, property damage, and public health risks. As a civil engineer, I've spent my career designing stormwater systems and green infrastructure solutions. On city council, I'll push for strategic investments that combine traditional infrastructure with sustainable practices, like permeable pavements, rain gardens, and natural buffers. This isn't just an environmental issue. It's an economic one. Flooding hurts businesses, homeowners, and taxpayers. Addressing it now will save money and protect property in the long run. My focus is on building a city that's resilient, not just for today, but for decades to come." [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier: "I support extending cross-city trails and investing in infrastructure that promotes biking, walking, and public transit." "PCD: You point out congestion, traffic and public transportation options as focuses of your campaign: What new ideas will you bring to the table to address these areas? RC: Expanding roadways is just one part of a broader solution. I support extending cross-city trails and investing in infrastructure that promotes biking, walking, and public transit. My goal is to create a balanced transportation system that meets the needs of all residents, from drivers to cyclists to pedestrians. That also means advocating for smarter signal timing, intersection upgrades, and long-range planning that looks decades ahead." [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2011: Collier supported making Market Street safer and more pedestrian friendly. "New Hanover County took another step closer Thursday to transforming the Market Street Corridor into a safer, more pedestrian-friendly area. The county's Planning Board adopted recommendations from a two-year study that includes ways for improving the character and safety of the 11-mile corridor that runs along Market Street from Colonial Drive to the Pender County line. 'It is a big step,' said New Hanover County Planning Board Chairman Richard Collier after Thursday night's meeting. 'It is the first step to help start alleviating some of the traffic congestion on Market Street.' For years, the Market Street Corridor has been referred to as ugly, dangerous and poorly planned. From 2005 to 2008, this area has experienced 1,851 crashes and six fatalities -- twice the average of similar streets throughout the state. In the October meeting, Collier said it was important to adopt the study in order to secure N.C. Department of Transportation funding to build medians. 'As far as I know, that funding is still on track,' Collier said Thursday." [Wilmington Star News, 1/7/11]

2010: Collier supported making improvements to the median in the Market Street corridor. "Wilmington and New Hanover County planning officials like the general concept of proposed improvements to Market Street, but the road to change is still a long one. The city's planning commission and county's planning board held a joint meeting Tuesday afternoon to review the results of a two-year study on the Market Street Corridor. The study, conducted by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., includes recommendations for improving the character and safety of the area. The 11-mile corridor that runs along Market Street from Colonial Drive to the Pender County line has been referred to as ugly, dangerous and poorly planned, Matt Noonkester of Kimley-Horn said during his presentation to the boards. The more than 200-page study includes a slew of recommendations such as adding a median from Colonial Drive to Porters Neck Road to improve safety. [...] New Hanover County Planning Board Chairman Richard Collier stressed the importance of passing the study in a timely manner in order to secure N.C. Department of Transportation funding for the median project, which would be divided into phases over multiple

years. ‘I would hate to miss the opportunity to get Market Street repaired in some manner,’ he said.” [Wilmington Star News, 10/27/10]

PHILOSOPHY & IDEOLOGY

Campaign website: “Common-sense leadership. Fiscal responsibility. Infrastructure first.”

“An engineer’s blueprint for New Hanover County. Common-sense leadership. Fiscal responsibility. Infrastructure first. The future of New Hanover County is on the ballot. Richard Collier is running for County Commission to bring practical, transparent, and fiscally responsible leadership to the decisions shaping our county’s future. New Hanover County is growing, and residents are feeling the pressure: traffic congestion, road improvements that are not keeping pace, rising costs, strain on public schools, concerns about overdevelopment, and taxes that already feel too high.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

Campaign website: “Build Smart. Spend Wisely. Keep It Livable. Protect What Matters.”

“Build Smart. Spend Wisely. Keep It Livable. Protect What Matters. Richard’s Blueprint is a practical plan for New Hanover County rooted in fiscal responsibility, smart planning, strong schools, public safety, environmental stewardship, and transparent government.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

November 2025: Collier said his engineering training and “core conservative principles” guide his approach to public service. “Collier emphasized that his engineering training and conservative principles guide his approach to public service. ‘My training as an engineer has shaped how I approach every problem,’ he wrote. ‘I study the details, look for the most efficient solution, and focus on results. Combined with my core conservative principles of fiscal responsibility, accountability, and limited government, I believe this approach is what New Hanover County needs to meet the challenges ahead.’ Looking ahead to the campaign, Collier said he is eager to engage with voters and share his vision for the county’s future. ‘In the year ahead, I plan to listen to voters, share my ideas, and earn their support. This is a special place and one worth protecting. I am ready to put my problem solving skills and can-do attitude to work to make New Hanover County the best place in North Carolina to live, work, and raise a family,’ Collier said.” [Port City Daily, [11/16/25](#)]

September 2025: Collier: “I’m not a politician — I’m a civil engineer who has spent 30 years solving real-world problems across North Carolina.” “Why are you the best candidate for this position? Collier: I’m not a politician — I’m a civil engineer who has spent 30 years solving real-world problems across North Carolina. My work on projects like Mayfaire and RiverLights shows I know how to manage growth while protecting our natural resources. I bring a practical, data-driven approach to tackling challenges like traffic, flooding, and public safety. I see opportunities where others see obstacles, and I know how to deliver cost-effective, long-term solutions. Wilmington needs a problem-solver with hands-on experience, and I’m ready to put my skills to work for our community.” [Wilmington Star News, [9/29/25](#)]

September 2025: Collier: “Other candidates may bring political or advocacy backgrounds, but I bring technical expertise and practical solutions.” “Port City Daily: What makes you qualified for a seat on council and sets you apart from other candidates? Richard Collier: What

sets me apart is experience where it matters most. For 30 years I've been a civil engineer, planning and delivering projects that shape how communities function—roads, stormwater systems, utilities, and developments. Right here in Wilmington, my work includes projects like Mayfaire and RiverLights, which required balancing growth with infrastructure, environmental protections, and community needs. I also understand how city codes, zoning, and permitting work because I've lived them both professionally and as a planning commissioner. Too often, city council makes decisions without fully grasping how they impact the systems that keep our city running. I know where the gaps are, how to fix them, and how to make our policies more effective. Other candidates may bring political or advocacy backgrounds, but I bring technical expertise and practical solutions. Wilmington doesn't need more talk — it needs leadership that knows how to turn plans into results.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

Collier: “I’m a problem solver. I see challenges not as obstacles, but as opportunities to find smart, cost-effective solutions that work in the real world.” “Collier said one of the benefits of his council candidacy is he isn’t a career politician. ‘I’m a problem-solver,’ Collier said. ‘I see challenges not as obstacles, but as opportunities to find smart, cost-effective solutions that work in the real world.’ Having grown up on a farm outside Fayetteville and attended N.C. State, Collier has had a three-decade career as a civil engineer and worked on various projects across North Carolina. Local developments include Mayfaire and Riverlights. Collier’s campaign is focused on infrastructure, environment, public safety and long-term planning, noting leaders must keep pace as Wilmington continues to grow. His goals include modernizing roads to reduce congestion, protecting water quality, expanding sidewalks and bike paths, as well as optimizing public transportation options.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Campaign website: “Richard supports law enforcement, fire-rescue, EMS, emergency management, and detention operations that are properly staffed, well-trained, and prepared to serve a growing county.” “Strengthen Public Safety. Public safety is a core responsibility of county government. Richard supports law enforcement, fire-rescue, EMS, emergency management, and detention operations that are properly staffed, well-trained, and prepared to serve a growing county.” [Committee to Elect Richard Collier, [accessed 7/23/26](#)]

2025: Collier called for “fair compensation for first responders.” “GWBJ: If elected, what changes would you like to see in Wilmington during your term? Collier: “I want Wilmington to prioritize long-term planning instead of short-term fixes. That means fair compensation for first responders, so we retain the talent needed to keep families safe. It means modernizing our roads, stormwater systems and utilities so they keep pace with rapid growth. And it means better collaboration with CFPUA, NCDOT and regional partners to align infrastructure planning with future needs. My focus will be on building systems that last, protecting neighborhoods and ensuring Wilmington is prepared for the next generation.” [WilmingtonBiz, [10/9/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “I’ll work to support first responders and invest in youth programs that prevent crime before it starts.” “Public safety is also critical — I’ll work to support first responders and invest in youth programs that prevent crime before it starts.” [Wilmington Star News, [9/29/25](#)]

2025: Collier said he wanted the Wilmington Police Chief to focus on “rebuilding morale inside the department, rebuilding trust outside of it, and building stronger partnerships with other agencies.” “PCD: With a new police chief starting his post for the Wilmington Police Department, what areas would you like to see him focus on to strengthen public safety and create a sustainable workforce? Explain. RC: Public safety is the foundation of a thriving city. I’d like to see our new police chief focus on three things: rebuilding morale inside the department, rebuilding trust outside of it, and building stronger partnerships with other agencies. Inside the department, we need to address retention and recruitment. That means competitive pay, but also leadership that supports officers and gives them the tools they need. Outside the department, we need more community policing — foot patrols, bike patrols, and stronger engagement in neighborhoods. People are more likely to trust officers they know. Finally, coordination with the district attorney’s office is critical. Targeting drug-related crime and repeat offenders requires both agencies working in lockstep. If we want a sustainable police force, officers must feel supported, residents must feel protected, and the system must deliver real results.” [Port City Daily, [9/24/25](#)]

2025: Collier supported public release of a third-party investigation into the Wilmington Police Department. “PCD: Do you think the city’s report on the third-party investigation into the police department should be released to the public? RC: Yes. If public funds were used to pay for the report, then the public deserves to see it — with appropriate redactions for privacy and safety. Transparency builds trust, and our institutions depend on that trust to function effectively.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

2025: Collier: “Public safety begins with properly supporting those who keep us safe.” “PCD: You mention law enforcement support and public safety: From where you sit, what are the main issues to tackle in these areas? Pay has been mentioned and a new chief is being hired at the PD; what direction would you like to see the police department go toward? RC: Public safety begins with properly supporting those who keep us safe. Police officers, firefighters, and emergency responders should be paid competitively and given the tools they need to do their jobs well. Wilmington is hiring a new City Manager and a new Police Chief this year — two leadership positions that will shape our city’s future. I’d like to see a chief with a proven record in crime prevention, department management, and community engagement. At the same time, we need to invest in youth programming that provides safe, positive outlets and encourages future generations to consider serving their community.” [Port City Daily, [5/7/25](#)]

LINKS

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PUBLIC RECORDS

Collier and his wife had a UCC lien filed against them in 2009. According to public records databases, Collier and his wife, Wendy, had a UCC lien filed against them by American General Financial Services in 2009. No information is available about the disposition of the filing. [Database Public Records Searches]

Public records identify three traffic infraction or criminal filings associated with Collier. According to public records databases Richard Collier received three traffic-level infractions filed in Wake County in 1986, 1987 and 1988, all disposed. [Database Public Records Searches]